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3/17/2008 12:29:00 PM

State names new director of Homeland Security

INDIANAPOLIS - Indiana's Department of Homeland Security has a new executive director.

Joseph E. Wainscott Jr. began his duties Monday after the former director resigned to return to Purdue University.

Wainscott has been the department's director of training since 2005. Prior to that, he was law enforcement coordinator for the U.S. Attorney's Office Southern District of Indiana and is a 23-year veteran of the Indiana State Police.

Wainscott, who grew up in Madison County, is now responsible for the state's emergency management and homeland security efforts.

Wainscott takes over for J. Eric Dietz, a retired Army colonel who resigned to return to the Purdue Homeland Security Institute as a tenured faculty member in the College of Technology.

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New Indiana homeland security director takes office

Updated: March 17, 2008 10:29 AM EDT

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Governor Mitch Daniels has named Joseph E. Wainscott, Jr., a training and law enforcement veteran, as the new executive director of the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS).

Wainscott began his duties today, March 17, 2008.

Wainscott, who grew up in Madison County, has been the IDHS director of training since October 2005 and has been responsible for managing and coordinating training and exercise programs and overseeing the Indiana Firefighter Training System, among other duties. He established the 10 multi-county fire training districts and helped fund more accessible training facilities for firefighters to build their skills.

As IDHS's executive director, Wainscott will be responsible for the state's emergency management and homeland security efforts, which include planning and assessment, preparedness and training, emergency response and recovery, fire and building safety and the Indiana Intelligence Fusion Center.

"The safety of Hoosiers is our first priority at all times," said Wainscott. "It's a challenge, and we are constantly investing resources to prevent, protect, respond to and recover from all types of natural and man-made hazards."

"One important focus will be the regular and consistent training of first responders. With the district system now in Indiana, our public safety professionals have more accessible opportunities to improve their individual and collective skills, which better equips them to protect Hoosiers."

"As the Indiana Department of Homeland Security watches out for the residents of Indiana, we also want to enlist the aid of citizens – keep them actively engaged – in their and their neighbors' safety."

For three years before joining IDHS, Wainscott was the law enforcement coordinator for the U.S. Attorney's Office-Southern District of Indiana. He also is a 23-year veteran of the Indiana State Police (ISP).

With the U.S. Attorney's Office, he worked as a liaison between the office and federal, state, county and local law enforcement agencies in the southern two-thirds of Indiana. He also was responsible for public safety training, terrorism, asset forfeiture and federally funded crime suppression initiatives.

During his 23 years with the ISP, Wainscott served as assistant district commander of Indianapolis Post, District 52, and was a member of the Emergency Response Team (SWAT) for 19 years and team leader for 12 years. He continues to serve as a member of the Indiana State Fraternal Order of Police Memorial Team.

Wainscott is a certified Indiana Law Enforcement Academy instructor, specializing in the area of Police Tactical Operations and Tactical Units. He also has served as an advisor for the Indiana School Safety Specialist Academy and received national certification in school safety leadership from the National School Safety Center.

Source: Indiana Department of Homeland Security

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Madison County native named head of Indiana Homeland Security

THE STAR PRESS

ANDERSON — Gov. Mitch Daniels has named Joseph E. Wainscott Jr., a training and law enforcement veteran, as the new executive director of the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS).

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New Indiana homeland security director takes office

Associated Press - March 17, 2008 10:04 AM ET

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State to probe fatal Gary fire

BY DAN HINKEL

dhinkel@nwi.com

219.933.4183 | Monday, March 17, 2008

GARY | State fire officials on Monday will be investigating the scene of a house fire killed a 35-year-old Gary man early Saturday morning.

Elvin Quarles died of severe burns and smoke inhalation about 3 a.m. in his home at 1764 Harrison Blvd. in Gary, said a spokesman for the Lake County coroner's office.

A spokeswoman with the Indiana Department of Homeland Security's fire investigations office said early Monday that a team of investigators was planning to travel to Gary later in the day for a probe into the nature of the blaze.

Neighbor Tonya Nicholson said Quarles' brother came to her door about 2:30 a.m. Saturday. He had a cut on his arm and he was crying, she said.

"He kept saying his house was on fire and his brother was in there," she said.

Quarles lived with his family on the upper floor of the white 1 1/2 story house, said downstairs neighbor Sharita Hall. She was out of town during the fire, but she returned to find water seeping through the ceiling of her apartment, which still smelled Sunday of acrid smoke. A memorial of stuffed animals and roses marked the home's yard.

-- Times Staff Writer Lauri Harvey Keagle contributed to this report

[**Return to Fire**](#)



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-- Times Staff Writer Lauri Harvey Keagle contributed to this report

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3/17/2008 6:30:00 AM

FEMA urges residents to protect themselves from floods

Flooding has already caused severe damage in twenty-one counties in Indiana this year, and FEMA urges residents to take steps now to protect themselves before more seasonal floods strike.

Floods are the most common natural disaster in the United States, and the spring months bring unique risks to inland states throughout the Midwest.

Spring weather brings rapid snowmelt, severe storms and heavy rainfall to Indiana each year, increasing the likelihood of flooding. Despite the increased risks in the area, currently only 1 percent of Indiana residents are insured against flood damage.

This spring marks the 15th anniversary of the Great Floods of 1993 - still one of the largest floods in United States history. During the spring and summer of 1993, nine Midwest states experienced catastrophic flooding that resulted in \$270 million in insured losses and more than \$15 billion in total damages. Although Indiana was one of few Midwest states untouched by the Great Floods of 1993, Indiana's spring flood risk has grown. For example, two floods in the last five Indiana spring seasons have been deemed Presidentially-declared disasters.

In 2007, total insured flood losses in Indiana cost more than \$1.5 million in damages.

"Floods pose a threat to every state in our nation and they happen year round - often with little notice," said David Maurstad, Assistant Administrator of Mitigation and Federal Insurance Administrator for FEMA. "We strongly encourage residents in Indiana - and across the country - to include flood insurance in their flood preparedness strategy."

Most homeowners policies do not cover flood damage. Flood coverage must be purchased separately, and there is typically a 30-day waiting period before a new flood insurance policy becomes effective, so the time to purchase a policy is now. Federally backed flood insurance is available to residents, business owners and renters in high and low- to moderate-risk areas.

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Two weeks left to apply for FEMA disaster assistance

BY THE TIMES | Monday, March 17, 2008

Indiana residents and business owners in the 21 counties included in the presidential disaster declaration have until March 31 to register for disaster assistance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The 21 counties included in the Indiana presidential disaster declaration are Allen, Benton, Carroll, Cass, Dekalb, Elkhart, Fulton, Huntington, Jasper, Kosciusko, Lake, LaPorte, Marshall, Newton, Noble, Pulaski, St. Joseph, Starke, Tippecanoe, Whitley and White.

Eligible residents and business owners who suffered damage from storms and flooding that began Jan. 7 can register for disaster assistance immediately, officials from FEMA and the Indiana Department of Homeland Security said. Loan applications to the U.S. Small Business Administration for disaster-related losses to real and personal property also must be submitted by March 31.

"We want people to understand that this deadline is for new disaster applications," said Mike Smith, Federal Coordinating Officer. "For those who already have applied, their cases will continue to be processed. New applications will not be accepted after the March 31 deadline."

Federal and state disaster recovery officials urge eligible residents who have not done so to apply as soon as possible by calling the toll-free registration number at 1-800-621-FEMA (3362), or, for the speech or hearing impaired, TTY 1-800-462-7585. Individuals also may register for disaster assistance at the FEMA website www.fema.gov.

Applicants who have questions about the disaster assistance programs or questions about the status of their previously filed applications should continue to use FEMA's toll-free Helpline at 1-800-621-3362.

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FEMA, state begin drive to get relief to all eligible Hoosiers

March 17, 2008

The Federal Emergency Management Agency is launching a campaign in an effort to make sure everyone available for federal disaster assistance following the January and February floods can get help.

FEMA and the Indiana Department of Homeland Security launched the "Tell Your Neighbor Campaign" about one week ago.

Officials are asking residents of areas damaged by the floods to contact their neighbors, family, friends and anyone else they can.

"Knock on your neighbor's door," said FEMA spokeswoman Melynda Petrie. "Call your relatives."

This is the first time such an organized campaign has been used in any federal disaster, she said. If it proves effective, FEMA will use it in future federal disasters.

Federal officials have already canvassed local media, posted fliers, used the Internet and gone door to door to get the word out, she said.

"But there may be people out there who still don't realize they're eligible for assistance," she said.

It's important to get the word out now, since all formal applications for assistance must be postmarked by March 31, she said.

Who's eligible: Homeowners, renters and business owners with flood damage in Allen, Benton, Carroll, Cass, DeKalb, Elkhart, Fulton, Huntington, Jasper, Kosciusko, Lake, LaPorte, Marshall, Newton, Noble, Pulaski, Starke, St. Joseph, Tippecanoe, White and Whitley counties.

Deadline: All applications for assistance must be postmarked by March 31.

How to apply: People are encouraged to register for assistance by calling the FEMA telephone registration line at (800) 621-3362.

For speech- or hearing-impaired applicants, the TTY number is (800) 462-7585. Applicants also may register online at www.fema.gov.

FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers also are open at two sites. Hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday

The locations are:

- Delphi Middle School gym, 210 High St., Delphi.
- White County Emergency Management Agency Office, 315 N. Illinois St., Monticello.

More information: Flood rebuilding and preparedness information as well as other pertinent information is available at www.fema.gov and at www.ready.gov.

-- Curt Slyder/cslyder@journalandcourier.com

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Herald Journal

Session highlights tax plan

Trent Wright

Editor

As the 115th General Assembly closed Friday evening, local residents were able to discuss with local lawmakers a bevy of subjects during Saturday morning's Third House session.

Joined by Representative Don Lehe at the Monticello Kiwanis Club-sponsored event at Brandywine, District 7 State Senator Brandt Hershman commented on months of political maneuvering over property taxes that ended just hours earlier as the House approved the bill 82-17 while the Senate voted 41-6. The property tax plan will provide major relief and restructuring that will give more tax cuts to homeowners this year and cap future for the majority of property owners.

A separate measure that would begin the process of amending the tax bill caps into the state constitution passed the House 79-20 and the Senate 40-7. Both chambers later gaveled out the session.

The package included several modified parts of a plan that Republican Gov. Mitch Daniels presented in October, including raising the sales tax from 6 percent to 7 percent beginning April 1 to help pay for part of the property tax relief.

"House bills filed 402, House bills passed by the House 114, House bills passed by the Senate 87, Senate bills filed 368, Senate bills passed by the Senate 149, Senate bills passed by the House 75, bills that matter - 1," Hershman stated Saturday morning. "We passed almost a 700 page bill yesterday (Friday) and it is the most historic property tax reform in a generation.

"Significant, permanent property tax reform in Indiana is long overdue. The reform package passed today will bring our tax code into the 21st Century and protect Hoosier taxpayers," Hershman added.

Hershman, co-author of House Bill 1001 and Senate conferee, said property taxes can be decreased further if counties adopt a Local Option Income Tax. If a county adopts a 1 percent LOIT and applies 50 percent of that revenue to homesteads and 50 percent as broad based property tax relief to all taxpayer groups, the average reduction in homeowner's tax bills by 2010 would be 53 percent, he said.

Here are highlights of House Bill 1001. (AV means assessed value.)

- Increases sales tax from 6 percent to 7 percent on April 1 to help pay for tax relief.
- Provides \$620 million in additional homestead credits this year, \$140 million in new homestead credits in 2009 and \$80 million in 2010. Homeowner bills would be reduced by about 30 percent on average statewide this year over last year's bills, and nearly 28 percent lower in 2010 over last year's bills.
- Phases in caps in property tax bills. When fully implemented in 2010, most homeowners' tax bills would be limited to 1 percent of their homes' assessed value (AV), with 2 percent limits on rental property and 3 percent on residential property.
- Separate legislation began process of amending the caps into the state constitution.
- Caps would save taxpayers about \$524 million in 2010. That's money schools and local governments would not get.

· \$120 million would be provided over the next two years to help offset the impact on schools. And schools would be allowed to have referendums to offset lost revenue.

According to Representative Lehe, House Bill 1001 is a step in the right direction.

"It's a very good start," Lehe commented. "Overall, I believe we passed a great piece of legislation that homeowners in my district will benefit from."

Monticello resident Jan Faker applauded both Hershman and Lehe's efforts in getting the property tax reform.

"Let me be the first to say how happy I am that this piece of legislation was passed and I applaud your courage and effort to get this done," Faker stated.

While property tax reform was a major topic of conversation, Hershman and Lehe also discussed other bills that passed late in the session.

Senate Bill 104, authored by Hershman was signed into law by Daniels Friday after receiving solid support from both parties. The law will allow flood victims to get started on the rebuilding of their homes.

Prior to the passage of this bill, homes that were 50 percent destroyed could not be rebuilt and would require the occupants to rebuild elsewhere. The law will align the Department of Natural Resources with Federal Emergency Management Agency's regulations, which allow homes in a floodway to be built two feet above the 100-year flood level.

"This important legislation will allow flood victims to get started on the repair and restructuring of their homes right away," Hershman said.

Also, HB1204 was amended by Hershman in the Senate to mandate the consolidation of 911 dispatch centers statewide to a maximum of two per county by the end of 2014. HB passed the Senate 47-0 and the House 83-13 on the last day of the legislative session.

"The reforms contained in HB1204 will increase government efficiency, save tax dollars, and help emergency services agencies free up funds to invest in the latest technology. It will save money and it could save lives," Hershman said.

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